

Level Up GUIDE



SESSION SUMMARY:

In this talk, John Barrett discusses the powerful problem-solving technique known as the "Five Whys," originally developed by Taiichi Ohno for the Toyota production system. Barrett emphasizes the importance of digging beneath the surface to identify the root cause of a problem, rather than just addressing the symptoms. By asking "why" at least five times, one can peel back the layers of an issue to discover the underlying factors. He illustrates this with a story of an employee who struggled with punctuality due to a series of deeper issues, ultimately resolved by changing the location of his desk. Barrett encourages leaders to apply the Five Whys in their teams and personal challenges to achieve better results and lasting solutions.

GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Can you recall a time when addressing a surface issue failed to resolve a deeper problem?
2. How can the Five Whys technique help us in our growth and self-reflection?
3. What are some challenges you face that could benefit from applying the Five Whys?
4. How can we ensure we're not just finding quick answers but truly seeking the root causes of issues?
5. In what ways can impatience hinder our ability to get to the root of a problem?
6. How can we cultivate a culture within our group that values deep understanding over quick fixes?
7. What role does humility play in admitting we may not immediately know the root cause of a problem?
8. How can we support each other in our group as we apply the Five Whys to our personal and collective challenges?

APPLICATION:

This week, challenge yourself to apply the Five Whys to a personal challenge or issue you are facing. Be honest and thorough in your questioning, and seek to uncover the true root of the problem. Share your findings with a trusted friend or mentor and discuss potential solutions. Remember, the goal is not just to solve a problem but to understand it deeply and prevent it from recurring.